



Speech By
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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Mining Industry, Fly-in Fly-out Employment

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (11.50 am): I wish to bring to the attention of the House the tragic social and economic situation that is currently facing the town of Moranbah and other mining communities. The single most influential factor that is causing the destruction of the cohesion and wellbeing of Moranbah has been the flawed 100 per cent fly-in fly-out requirements of the mining companies. Over the years, many campaigns have been fought highlighting the unavoidable impact on mining towns at a pace that even blind Freddy could see coming.

I must express great disappointment in the previous Labor government, which backed the mining companies over mining communities and paved the way to lead these communities into a disastrous situation. Then along came can-do Campbell Newman, who presented himself as the saviour and stood up and said that the 100 per cent fly-in fly-out plan was unfair on locals and would force many to move to Brisbane to gain work on a project that is just kilometres from their home. He made some very clear statements that 100 per cent fly-in fly-out applications would not be acceptable under his government. Premier Newman said—

These are really tough times for people out here and what we'd like to see is those people given a fair go.

Well, Premier, times are now tougher.

And I say to Deputy Premier Jeff Seeney, who is attempting to play down the seriousness of the 100 per cent fly-in fly-out situation as a conspiracy, that he needs to get out of his subterranean existence and venture out into the real world and talk to mining families rather than his mining company mates.

There are 320 vacant homes in the Moranbah-Dysart area. Numerous businesses are closing. Recently, Leading Edge Computers, Ma's Larder and Leading Edge Telecoms have closed down. Motels are running at 10 per cent to 20 per cent occupancy while the mining companies are forcing contractors to keep out of motels and stay in camps or no contract is offered.

I would like to give an example of some ridiculous situations that mine employees have forced on them through fly-in fly-out employment. I will not mention their names, otherwise those employees would be sacked on the spot. One person has lived in Moranbah with their partner for many years. This person flies to Brisbane before their roster starts and then flies back to Moranbah and lives in the camp for the rostered shift. After the rostered shift, that person flies to Brisbane before flying back to Moranbah for their days off. The mine is 20 minutes drive from their home in Moranbah. Another person went for an interview for a job at the mine. He was told that, if he was successful with his application, there was something that he needed to comply with. He could not leave the camp after work. He could not go to Coles or McDonald's and, if he did, he would be fired. He must reside in Brisbane or Cairns to be employed at Moranbah. He must take the plane to Brisbane at the end of the shift. He was also told that the mine had a social media watcher and anything that he said or did on

social media could result in him being fired from his job. I have heard many similar examples of workers who have been required to fly to Brisbane or Cairns, fly back to Moranbah and live in the mine camps for their rosters, then return to Brisbane or Cairns and then return to their homes in one of the mining towns.

Since when can employers control where their employees live? Even Stalin would have been more compassionate to his employees and their families. Forcing families and children to live apart for weeks at a time is highly destructive to the family unit and the fabric of society. How is it that the government is prepared to watch families disintegrate because of outrageous mining company demands?

Each year, this sector rakes in \$1 billion in royalties that go into the government's coffers. One would think that supporting these mining communities would be the main focus of government rather than those communities being treated with contempt. It is very simple. On behalf of mining communities, I am calling on the state government to take serious action and meet with the mining companies and the communities to resolve the ongoing catastrophe that is resulting from the implementation of the 100 per cent fly-in fly-out policy.